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VOL. 38—No. 49

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1860

PRICE 4d. Unstamped  
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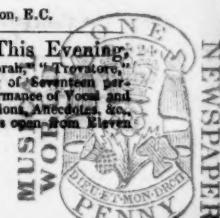
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“ Thou art so near and yet so far ” ...	...	Herr Reichardt	A. Reichardt	3 0
“ Good night ” (cradle song) ...	...	Ditto	Ditto	2 6
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“ Good bye, my love, good bye ” ...	...	2 0

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## “ GOOD NIGHT,” (Cradle Song—Wiegenlied) composed by ALEXANDER REICHARDT, price 2s. 6d. London: published by Duncan Davison &amp; Co., 244 Regent Street, W.

The day, pretty darling, draw near to its close,  
Come, cease from your play, on your pillow repose,  
You sleep from the cradle still laughing and bright,  
Kind angels for ever preserve you, good night.

With freedom from sorrow, dear child, you are blest,  
To a pure heaven is your fond mother's breast,  
Wild passion some day will your happiness blight,  
Kind angels preserve you, my darling, good night.

Ah ! happy is he who can slumber like you,  
Be ever, dear child, to your innocence true,  
The righteous are watched by the spirits of light,  
Who guard them while sleeping, my darling, good night.

“ Few songs of modern days have achieved a more decided or better merited success than Herr Reichardt's charming lied, “ Thou art so near and yet so far,” which has for the last two years been the delight of all concert-goers and drawing-room vocalists of more than ordinary pretensions. Messrs. Duncan Davison and Co. have just published a new composition, from the same original and elegant pen, entitled “ Good Night ” (a cradle song). The words are exquisitely simple and unaffected, being the address of a mother to her sleeping babe; and it is but justice to Herr Reichardt to say that he has wedded an exquisite domestic poem to a most graceful, unaffected melody, which breathes the very spirit of maternal tenderness. The song, which is written for a tenor voice—the composer being, as we readers know, one of the first of living German vocalists—is in the key of F major; and to amateurs of taste we can cordially recommend “ The Cradle Song ” as a composition worthy of their attention.”—*Liverpool Mail*.

## NEW WALTZ, “ The Woman in White,” Valse mystérieuse, by Charles Marriott, dedicated to Wilkie Collins, Esq., is just published price 2s., by Duncan Davison &amp; Co., 244, Regent Street, W.

## BACH AND MENDELSSOHN.\*

FROM A SOCIAL POINT OF VIEW.

He who would praise Mendelssohn as he merits, must not forget how many thousands have been attracted to the study of Handel and Bach, through him, and how, with his works, he opened out, for the whole nation, a new appreciation of these men, whose immortal fame will always be ours, yet whom we seemed for a time to have forgotten. Many, even, who cared to hear little else save Parisian and Italian music, have had new pleasure in German musical art awakened in them by Mendelssohn. Here we may plainly see how much more effectual is artistic creation, than all the preaching and theorising in the world. Zealous critics had long thought to direct attention, with words, to the sublime models Bach and Handel offered us; but as soon as Mendelssohn set his exhortation to notes—or in notes—it succeeded at one blow.

Mendelssohn never betrayed his nationality; how few German masters there are, who can be placed side by side with him in this! Many write in an un-German spirit, and know not what they do. For of all arts, music is the oftenest pursued without thought, while poetry, painting and sculpture allow the changeful conditions of national life to flow in upon them, the majority of composers create according to chance, or, at best, as a happy instinct guides them.

This is the principal reason why music, that otherwise might become so extraordinary a power, rarely works practically upon the spiritual life of the nation. Mendelssohn chose, consciously, the stand-point of national effectuality. There are some musicians who can forgive him all but this!

With such a view of the case, it seems a rare accident of destiny—if not something more—that Mendelssohn did not produce an opera. Formerly, an opera might have been carelessly enough composed, and, for all that, it might succeed famously; but the case is altered now. Half a musical generation asked a deep, artistic completion for the opera; and Mendelssohn, the very man of men for this, the only man, perhaps, who could have entirely forced German opera from its incompleteness—must die, when the first act of his opera was yet scarcely finished.

That restorative tendency, by means of which German historical paintings has lately gained such triumphs, naturalised itself with music, in Mendelssohn; indeed, it is a characteristic sign of the musical present. As Overbeck, Veit, and Steinle painted the sacred histories, of which people did not want to hear anything more, in the serious old style, so Mendelssohn wrote his oratorios and church compositions; but he did not stand still at the ecclesiastical, though he clung as obstinately as the painters to the antiquated; and his circle of view became wide as the world itself, his works more full of life, and more in accordance with the spirit of our own age, although he did not always succeed in making himself fully master of his powers. When a good historic school is founded in our music—and we may safely predict that the near future will see it—Mendelssohn will be named the precursor of that school. We would have the young generation swear at the Master's grave, not to forget that this is the great heritage he has left to us: and to see to it, that to such an inheritance an heir is raised up.

Mendelssohn's position in the history of music, may be compared with that which the Caracci occupy in the history of Italian painting. They also purified degenerate art, and returned to the study of the old classic masters, while, sustained by theoretic knowledge—like Mendelssohn—they created thoughtfully conceived works. Their aim has been styled an eclectic one. The same may be truly said of Mendelssohn, who with studied consciousness united in one whole the prominent characteristic of earlier schools; a union, which is new in its combination, if not in its parts. It betokens a season of decay, when artists feel themselves obliged to look backward, in order to gather inspiration for new creations, from the study of more fortunate predecessors. Is this also the case in the history of music? Does not the overabundance of merely technical effects, the abuse of form, look desperately like the degenerate time of historic painting? the Caracci

were not able to dam the in-breaking flood of destruction; will the Mendelssohnian school permanently succeed?

When Mendelssohn placed Handel, Bach, and Beethoven, as foundation posts of all further progress in modern music, he brought great changes, not only into production, but even into the current traditional aspect of things. The masters who were looked upon at that time, as peculiarly classic, namely Mozart and Haydn, have been—and especially the last named—practically ignored by Mendelssohn. His entire direction is, in fact, an indirect polemic against theirs. This is easy to understand; for that very degeneration in modern music, against which Mendelssohn fought so manfully, is rooted, partly in a misunderstanding of Beethoven, and partly in the spiritless superficiality, which may be traced back, in a direct line, to the stupidly mechanical imitators of Mozart and Haydn. It is plain that such music, running into the sand of the driest triviality, must have been a peculiar horror to a man like Mendelssohn; and when the silly tone-play decorated itself with the spangles of German and French new-romanticism, it was difficult to subdue—for the Philister is immortal. But Mendelssohn was a re-action in himself; he caused us to forget the Viennese tone-school in Handel, Bach, and Beethoven. And we must acknowledge, besides, that, in spite of his classic spirit, he knew better how to set off the clear, delicately sensuous geniality of Haydn and Mozart, than all young Germany and the new romantics together.

(To be continued).

## OTTO JAHN'S "MOZART."

(From the *Morning Post*.)

MOZART! Such is the brief and compendious title of Mr. Otto Jahn's very long, elaborate, and scrupulously careful work, the fourth and last volume of which is just out; the first having appeared in 1856, more than four years ago. Mr. Jahn was obviously in no hurry to complete his labours, but he has proceeded surely as well as slowly; and so vast is the amount of facts accumulated, so valuable the information acquired, that those who have the courage to read the production from end to end will doubtless be more than satisfied. Of Mozart the *composer*—a being whom all civilised creatures know, or think they know—there remained, perhaps, but little to tell; but about Mozart the *man* it appears that a good deal was left for Mr. Jahn to communicate, and he has told it with a disregard to brevity and concentration quite astonishing even in a German writer. Such a book, the first volume of which is alone longer than Johnson's "Lives of the British Poets," should have been published in the age of the patriarchs; for the present exceedingly curtailed duration of human life it is far too long. Mendelssohn might possibly have found it light reading.

Our objection, however, applies only to Mr. Jahn's method of treating his subject; to his extreme prolixity and verbosity; his unhappy fondness for dwelling upon merely subordinate matters and trifling events, which throw no new light upon the character or genius of his hero, and are therefore of no use to the world; and must not be understood to call in question the importance of the subject itself—to involve any insinuation that Mozart did not deserve the greatest possible amount of attention which enlightened criticism can bestow; for we consider him to have been one of the greatest men that ever lived; and as there is even now a tendency to believe that music is a peculiar faculty, and that a composer may be superlative in his own particular art without possessing generally any intellectual supremacy—an opinion supported by certain literary men who influence the public mind, but which we reject as utterly false and ridiculous—it may, perhaps, be permitted us to observe that when we trace in a musical composition the operation of precisely the same principles which would constitute the greatness of a first-class poem, or any other noble work of art, we cannot help recognising the same grand qualities of intellect applied to different objects; and if further comparisons be needed, we can add that when we have to note the absence of these great qualities in a small literary work, we naturally conclude that it is decidedly inferior as an intellectual production to the musical composition which does possess them; and thus, for example,

\* (From Richl's *Musikalische Charakterköpfe*.)

we find Mozart's *Jupiter* symphony very much more intellectual than the *Godolphin* of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, who says, "very stupid people often become very musical; it is a sort of pretension to intellect that suits their capacities. Plutarch says somewhere that the best musical instruments are made from the jaw-bones of asses. Plutarch never made a more sensible observation." And we also consider Handel's "Messiah" to be a very much greater illustration of human genius than the "Biography of the Right Hon. Benjamin Disraeli," in which music is again treated with contempt, or even the "Coningsby" of this anonymous author's hero. The fact is, that such *littérateurs* are not in a condition to feel or understand great intellectual achievements of any kind, simply because the smaller cannot contain the greater. If they could comprehend the principles upon which noble works are wrought, they would necessarily recognise them in whatever form they might appear, and write much better than they do, or not at all.

Beside the musical composition, which exhibits with soul-searching power the sublime and beautiful of human feeling, the loftiest and purest ideality, expressed by such scientific means as can only be acquired through the exercise of reason in its highest state of development, surely the modern novel—the mere minute copy of manners, and sometimes very silly manners—or the "brilliant *fantasia*" upon history, in which the description of dresses, scenery, or social customs constitutes the chief attraction, dwindles into hopeless insignificance, just as it would before the Iliad, the Laocoön, or the Last Judgment.

We can thus easily understand and sympathise with the enthusiasm that led Mr. Jahn to write so long a book, and can likewise applaud him for leaving nothing untold with respect to the private career of his immortal hero. Some think that it lessens our admiration for a creative artist—for the poet "hidden in the light of thought"—to see him brought before the world "in his habits as he lived;" to be made acquainted with what he said, and wrote, and did, and suffered as a private citizen. In certain instances it may do so; but we are nevertheless of opinion that the humanity which would throw a veil over the errors of genius is at best but an amiable weakness, and the fastidiousness that would exclude the knowledge of what are termed "every day occurrences" (how poetical are many of them!) for fear of disturbing some aesthetical impression, is a refinement of selfishness, and an unwholesome squeamishness worthy only the Sybarites of sentiment. Even where revelations of the private life of genius afford more pain than pleasure, it is of the utmost importance that the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, should be spoken, that the heart of the divinely-gifted should be laid palpitating before the world, that the secret springs of thought and action should be unveiled, the causes and influences which can act upon immortal mind be noted and remembered. But where, as in the case of that beautiful, bright, and loving spirit, Mozart, there is no vice to describe that is not covered by a hundred virtues, no tares to be detected that are not inextricably entangled with the whole-some wheat, it were difficult indeed to find even the shadow of a reason why any one thing relating to him should be kept from the public.

This copious, conscientious, and excellent biography of Mozart, who combined in his own works the greatest qualities of all previously existing schools, and looked far into the future; who, commingled the sensuous beauty of Italian melody, the deep expression of German harmony, and the dramatic truth of the so-called French manner; of him who rendered the rigid contrapuntal science of the ancient masters completely subservient to the purposes of poetical thought and emotion; who could sing as spontaneously and sweetly in fugue or canon as in the simplest composition; who, in short, carried musical art to the highest perfection, and is the "model master," if ever there was one—this carefully written record of all that Mozart did and suffered—this elaborate philosophical disquisition upon his merits, both as a man and as an artist, is certainly not to be disposed of satisfactorily in one brief notice. Mr. Otto Jahn was more than four years writing the work, and a few days must be conceded us for reviewing it. Meanwhile we recommend the biography strongly to the attention of the musical public.

## VIENNA.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THE musical event of the week has been the performance of *Ernani* at the Kärntnertor Theatre. Mad. Csillag most eminently distinguished herself as the heroine of the evening, and by her energetic singing and acting achieved a great success. Herr Wachtel sang the tenor part admirably. An opera by Rubenstein, the pianist, is in active rehearsal, and will probably be produced early next month. It is spoken of by the friends of the composer as a work of merit, and great hopes are entertained of its success. *Nous verrons.*

## HOW IS IT?

TO HORACE (ESQ.) MAYHEW.

MY DEAR HORACE,—How many of the present generation, who really have given any time and attention to music, have felt this thought pass through their minds: How is it? The operas of the present day, with few exceptions, are written for money, and money only. Did the great "tone poet" write for money only? Examine his works, and then say if what you find there waited for a price, or was written to order. We will not dispute that he *did* write for money, because money procured that without which he could not live, and consequently could not write; but, see his house, his furniture, his dress—all that belonged to him. Did he look as if he wrote for money? Would his nine great symphonies have remained pent up in that wonderful soul of his, never to have come out, except for money? How is it? Was Mozart's only idea to gain money? How is it that nearly all musicians, or rather great writers, die poor? They make a great deal of money most of them. Money, as I said before, is a necessary evil; but look at our writers of the present day—money is all they care about! They write operas to order; so much an air—so much an act—so much more for an overture.\* Do ever any of our great writers of the present day write *three* overtures to their operas, as we find for *Fidelio*? Why, a good overture in the present day is as "*rara*" an "*avis*" as a dead donkey. We do occasionally get a tune that has the honour of reaching a barrelled organ. Its composer, no doubt, as he wends his way through otherwise silent squares, wraps his cloak around him, and hears with great satisfaction his production dinned, in the most objectionable way possible, into the ears of his fellow-citizens. What is more objectionable or sickening than a constant queror of Shakspere? And how many other luxuries become nuisances by being served up when they are not wanted. The English Opera, which is making gigantic struggles to obtain a permanent footing in London, is all written to order. How is it? Music *cannot* be written to order; neither can *anything* which involves a high order of inspiration. On the contrary, it mars and mutilates, very frequently, ideas which are unripe, and which, if allowed to bud and bloom without being forced, bring forth good fruit, which might live for posterity to delight in; but now you see we have our monthly roses, which we take a passing smell of, and they wither and die. How is it? They are written to order! Is that a correct and final answer, or not? Would these composers write immortal works if they *did not* write for money? Perhaps there are some sufficiently interested to endeavour to solve this question. One thing is quite certain, that the operas of the present day *are* written to order, and like most things written to order, soon wear out. How is it? What, my dear Horace, has become of the "tone poet" genus?

As ever, your faithful

CRUMB.

*Rolls Alley, Loaf Circus, Bread Street, Dec. 5.*

[\* Beethoven wrote *four* overtures to *Fidelio* as Mr. Horace Mayhew very well knows, and could have told "Crumb" had he seen "Crumb" before "Crumb" committed his letter to paper;—*four* overtures, three in C, and one—as Mr. Horace Mayhew very well knows, and could have told "Crumb," &c.—in E.—PETIPACE.]

MR. GYE, lessee and manager of the Royal Italian Opera, has returned from the continent.

## THE ENTERPRISING IMPRESARIO.

## CHAPTER I.

He is an anomaly. Never at rest and yet an idle man. Selfish, but continually promoting the success of others. Worshipped when sought after, to be, when found, remorselessly tormented. He leads the most anxious life, and can, nevertheless, indulge in venison and champagne while others make his fortune. He is at once the most despotic ruler and submissive slave. The "super" trembles at his nod while he is kneeling at the prima donna's feet. He is the impersonation of unlimited liability. He is liable to the public, liable to the artists, liable to government, liable to proprietors, in short, liable to everything and everybody except himself.

By nature amphibious, at times strutting proudly upon the high and dry land of prosperity; at others wallowing in the muddy waters of misfortune; equally familiar with both—a philosopher—he is indifferent to either. His habits are luxurious, even to extravagance. Whether fortune frown or smile, he keeps his carriages and horses, is a good whip, and, if not gouty, riding is his favourite exercise. I have studied the "enterprising *Impresario*," carefully in every phase of his existence, and confess my inability to understand him thoroughly. He varies in some respects from every other member of the community. I purpose giving an account of my experiences and observations of the race, in order that others may form some notion of their anomalous characteristics.

I recal with pleasure that I was of service to the first "enterprising *Impresario*" with whom I became acquainted. The incident is fresh in my memory. I still hear the shrill angry voices; but let me tell the story.

It was some years ago, in a London theatre late at night. The performance of the evening had terminated; the audience had dispersed; the gas was extinguished—all was dark and silent. I had occasion to see the *Impresario* in question upon important business, and was requested by his secretary to wait but a few moments, and that he would be disengaged. The moments had extended into hours, and I was still doing, as the French say, *l'antichambre*. The secretary had locked up his desk and departed—I was left alone to await the desired interview. Some time after I had been thus forsaken, and when almost on the point of also taking my departure, my attention was arrested by the sounds of high words in the adjoining room, followed by a noise of what appeared to be the clashing of swords. The hour of night and stillness of all around added to the interest of the situation, and perhaps made the noise seem more important than it really was. I listened attentively—the quarrel waxed warmer—there were two voices audible, although one was less distinct, being overcome by the power and volubility of the other. Both spoke in a foreign tongue. A sword, or some other steel instrument, was evidently in the hands of one of the disputants, from its ringing sound when struck forcibly against the ground in the anger of the holder. Everybody had left the building; there was no one within hearing, except myself and the two whose dispute I overheard. What course to take?—Whether to interfere, perhaps to prevent bloodshed, or quietly await the result of the quarrel? I was a stranger, quite unknown to both, in fact, was ignorant who they really were. My unceremoniously rushing in upon them would perhaps be resented as an intrusion, and yet some interference seemed imperatively necessary. I listened again, and knocked at the door. Some time elapsed before I was answered. At last, being told to "come in," I entered, and a most remarkable scene I witnessed. The "enterprising *Impresario*" whom I then saw for the first time, was seated at his writing table, surrounded by the usual quantity of letters, newspapers, and play bills peculiar to a manager's room, while before him stood a figure in stage costume, brandishing a sword, and speaking in a voice excited to the highest pitch by the most violent passion. The quiet manner and seeming indifference of the *Impresario*, afforded a remarkable contrast to the menacing gestures of the other, whose anger was evidently exasperated by his imperturbable coolness. I was requested to be seated, and my surprise was great, when, upon looking at the figure a second time, I discovered it to be that of a female in male attire! At length the *Impresario* rose and came towards me. The lady had not observed my entrance. Upon seeing a third

person present, her manner completely changed, and making some hurried apology, she suddenly left the room.

It appeared she was a member of the company and had, after the performance, rushed to the manager in her stage dress, to complain of some real or imaginary grievance which it was utterly hopeless the unoffending *Impresario* could rectify. "Had you not so kindly interrupted us," he said to me, "we should have been here till daylight or God knows what might have happened." And thus I released the first "enterprising *Impresario*" of my acquaintance from an unpleasant position, and rendered him a service for which he was grateful ever after.

ANTEATER.

## NEW SCHOOL OF DANCING MUSIC.

To the joined Authors of the "Goose with the Golden Eggs."

GENTLEMEN, BURLESQUISTS, and WITS,—Having suggested improvements in some of our musical instruments, I beg to add one on the elegant and enlivening art of dancing, which some one, at a future period, will probably introduce to the notice of the public.

Like other accomplishments, dancing has undergone changes during the last thirty years, and the music that accompanies it become of a more varied character; and instead of only one description, we have five kinds of tunes—the waltz, polka, quadrille, hornpipe and country dance; and although the waltz, polka, and quadrille are generally of a lively character, the shortness of the tunes renders them, after a few times hearing, monotonous to advanced musicians.

To improve upon our present dancing music, and at the same time introduce and render familiar to the million the higher provinces of instrumental composition, it has occurred to me that figures might be invented by a skilful dancing-master to fit the quick movements of the best overtures and symphonies, the slow introduction to the former to be played by the band, and the *allegro* danced; and by repeating some portions of the figure, it might be spun out the length of the quick portion of the overture, and, with a little extra tuition, become as common to dance the overture to *Figaro* or *Tancredi* as a polka or a set of quadrilles.

The first *allegro* of a *sinfonia* being equal in length to about three sets of quadrilles, I would recommend the opening *adagio* to be played without a figure, the *allegro* following danced, the next movement played, to afford the dancers time to rest, and then finish with the *minuetto* and *finale*; the former danced as a waltz, and the latter with a suitable figure. This new school of dancing music would render familiar to the majority the finest instrumental compositions of the greatest masters, and thus elicit more attention when played at our places of public amusement than they do at the present, besides procuring them a larger sale at the music shops, and also holding out encouragement to such of our rising composers as possess talent enough to write them to try their hand, restoring the public taste in the majority to what it was forty years ago, which has been on the decline for genuine scientific music, instead of improving, during the last thirty years, that any person may perceive who observes the amount of attention paid by the audience at our theatres and tavern concert-rooms when a symphony or overture is even well performed by a good band at the former, and on the pianoforte at the latter, whatever some may be inclined to assert to the contrary.

Yours, Gentlemen and Wits,  
HAYDN WILSON.

MISS POOLE.—We are happy to be able to inform our readers that the report of the death of this charming vocalist, which obtained such currency at the beginning of the week, and caused such deep grief to her numerous admirers, is entirely without foundation. Miss Poole has been indisposed, but is now so far recovered as to be on the point of resuming her professional duties. It would appear that the more distressing a rumour the wider its probable circulation, for we have received inquiries from all quarters respecting the one which we now with so much pleasure and satisfaction contradict.

## Letters to the Editor.

## FLORAL HALL CONCERTS.

SIR,—Having read some time since an article on the Floral Hall Concerts, in which occurs the following passage:—

“It is unnecessary to say more than that this concert was regarded somewhat in the light of a festival, being expressly ‘for the benefit of Mr. Alfred Mellon’ (we had been led to believe, by the way, that the entire series were for his ‘benefit;’ in other words, that the undertaking was exclusively his own,)” &c.—

Will you kindly permit me to state that the undertaking was exclusively mine, and that no other person had any interest in it whatever.

It being customary for managers to take a benefit at the conclusion of the season, I only followed an established rule in announcing a night as my own.

Apologising for troubling you with this letter,

I remain, Sir, your obliged and obedient Servant,  
ALFRED MELLON.

## SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.

SIR,—It is with more than usual gratification that you should chronicle the first performance of this season. The programme of coming events is big with a promise of Beethoven's Mass in D, a work twice performed five years ago, but since then most undeservedly laid on the shelf. Another good thing from the Society's *répertoire*, which is not often done, is *Solomon*, and its performance on Friday week now claims your attention.

The oratorio *Solomon* is throughout a remarkable and characteristic work of Handel. Among the choruses, we find “With pious heart,” “From the censer,” “From the East,” and several others which contain some of his greatest ideas, and many of which exemplify his skill and felicitous use of the antiphonal form. Indeed, the opening chorus of the second part, “From the censer curling rise,” must be classed with “The Horse and his Rider,” and “He gave them hailstones for rain,” as a specimen of a style in choral treatment, which is without a rival for breadth and grandeur of effect, and has been seldom equalled in point of skill, or tact in management of voices and instruments. One or two of the choruses are unique, such as “May no rash intruder,” and “The name of the wicked,” each being an individual specimen of phases of Handel's multifarious and comprehensive style. The admirable overture and accompaniments of this work are an additional charm; and among the airs are the well-known “What tho' I trace?” and “Every sight these eyes behold.”

The execution of the instrumental and choral portion of the work on Friday night was, as you are aware, apart from the well-known capabilities of the Society, remarkable for its general efficiency and accuracy. The choruses with solo, “Music spread,” &c. were sung—as you must remember—with an artistic feeling rare in so large a body. The much talked of reform in the choir, seems to have come into operation. Are you of my opinion?

The solo singers are answerable for the effect which this oratorio produces to an unusual extent. The solos, particularly the recitatives, are numerous and long, and require the most artistic treatment. When it is stated that the *soprano* music was in the hands of Mad. Sherrington-Lemmens and Miss Banks, your readers may be assured that all that an easy and fluent delivery, an unswerving faultlessness of intonation and wonderfully distinct articulation, joined with a perfectly natural, free, and unaffected style, could do, in exaltation of so great a work, was done. In *contralto* singing, Mad. Sainton seems to gain in beauty of voice and dignity and benignity of manner, no less than in vocal skill and knowledge of the art; and yet this would have been thought impossible when we remember her singing during the last few years. Mr. Montem Smith is welcome on many accounts; a good healthy manly tenor voice is a rarity in the present day; and Mr. Smith always uses his natural gift with taste and judgment. Mr. Lewis Thomas claims (and readily obtains) credit for the possession of one of the finest real bass voices we have had for some years. The volume of tone, and the vigour of the lower notes is

remarkable; while the manly expression with which he renders his most ponderous passages shows artistic taste of no common order.

In this oratorio, as in *Deborah* and some others, Mr. Costa's pen has been called into requisition for additional accompaniments, To meddle with Handel is an unwelcome task, and includes rivalry with Mozart among other considerations; but making every allowance for the difficulty of the case,— &c., &c., &c.

I am, Sir, your obedient  
SHOULDER.

[We agree here with “Shoulder,” if not there; which, he will urge is neither here nor there; to which we may re-urge, or r'urge—in extenuation of a passage omitted, and for which “&c. &c. &c.” must be accepted as substitute—“*Quippe non delicta regum illos, sed vires ac majestatem insequi.*” The words applied by the Latin historian to the persecutors of crowned heads will serve equally well as a reproof to “Shoulder,” in his new capacity of persecutor of batoned hands. He pursueth not the faults but the strength and majesty. What says Pascal?—“*La raison agit avec lenteur . . . ou elle s'égare;*” and Burns?—“Ah Nick! ah Nick! (Old Nick—“Shoulder”) *it is na fair;*” and Huon of Bordeaux,—“*Je scais bien vétir le haubert, et mettre le heaume en mon chef.*” Michael Costa knows eke.—Ah “Shoulder!”—must it be spoken of you, as of the ambitious man in Burton's *Partn. 1 Sec. 2, Mem. 3, Subs. 11*—we quote from memory—“*Si appetitum explore non potest furore corripitur?*” It is sad to think it, but we are shouldered into that conclusion. “*Saepè homo de vanæ glorie contemptu, vanius gloriatur;*” as Shirley Brooks might exclaim, without in the least parodying Austin.—PETIFACE.]

## A LAPSPUS PENNAE.

SIR.—Mr. Punch, who, like a wise man and philosopher, reads the MUSICAL WORLD, informs the *ordinary* world that he has learnt from your columns how the natives of Baden-Baden, sensibly appreciating the genius of Meyerbeer, had newly christened one of their thoroughfares, *L'Avenue Meyerbeer*, in honour of the composer of *Les Huguenots*. To the best of my recollection, however, it was stated that the *inhabitants of Spa, in Belgium*—not of Baden, in Baden—had added to the interest and attractions of their pretty town, by paying so graceful a compliment to their honoured guest, who has composed many of his *chefs-d'œuvre* while residing amongst them. I am sure that Mr. Punch would not willingly disturb the harmony existing between the MUSICAL WORLD and Spa, and must therefore conclude that your humorous contemporary has for once been guilty of a *lapsus penna*—a-liner. —Yours,

PORCUPINE OF LIVERPOOL.  
[If so, a considerable *calamity*—PETIFACE.]

## ORGANS AND ORGAN-PLAYERS.

(From Punch.)

THE art of (street) organ-playing, dear Mr. Punch, has attained to such a degree of popularity at the present day, especially in the suburbs of London, that, knowing as I do from a constant perusal of your pages the great interest you take in the subject, I venture to offer a few suggestions for your consideration; and my remarks will perhaps have greater weight if I mention, with all due modesty, that I am myself a performer of some experience on that noble instrument, as I have frequently in my younger days, by the offer of small coins, induced the gentleman who attended our house to allow me to turn the handle of his organ.

I would suggest that, with regard to the performance of the most favourite airs,—as, for example, *Il Balen* or the *Power of Love*,—it should not be considered necessary to play them oftener than about twenty-five times each in any one place, as a more frequent repetition occasionally produces a feeling of

monotony; and if the organ should happen to be revoltingly out of tune, as might sometimes be the case, the performer should consider himself limited to a fifteenth repetition of those ever-fresh and beautiful melodies. In cases where the player accompanies the organ with his voice,—where a pedal passage is introduced,—where there is a monkey *obbligato*,—in short, where any gesticulation is required from either performer,—the duration of the entertainment should be limited to half an hour before each house, as a longer performance is an unreasonable tax on the physical powers of the executants. In case of sickness in any house which he might visit, I think it should certainly be left to the judgment and good taste of the performer to determine how long he should play; and no remonstrances ought, under any circumstances, to be offered by the inhabitants. I trust that these few suggestions will be received in the spirit in which they are offered by those whose arduous business it is to perambulate the streets for our gratification, and I hope that they will meet with due consideration from all admirers of the Italian school of organ-playing.

I remain, dear *Mr. Punch*, very truly yours,  
A LOVER OF THE "DIVINE ART."

NEW YORK.—Looking back during the period of some five or six months since I have written to you, I find that I have passed through some agreeable if not startling musical experience. Various brief opera seasons under transient Italian and German dynasties have come and gone. Stigelli, whom I hailed with rapturous delight on his first appearance here, has become the *tenor* of a New York audience. Fabbri has appeared and established a good lyrical reputation. Colson has sung and acted and dressed, and looked so indescribably bewitching, that with half the opera enthusiasts in New York I have fallen deeply—oh! so unfathomably deeply—in love with the delightful creature. Adelina Patti has worn her popularity not quite out—but sufficiently so to demand a change. Carl Formes has returned, and D'Angri has arrived, and that classic ruin Frezzolini, whose every operatic performance (notwithstanding her decaying voice) is positively worth shekels of gold, has flitted away down South, to Dixie, for all I know. Were you ever in the Mammoth Cave? It is, with all its wonders, the most god-forsaken, dreary, gloomy spot mortal ever entered. Yet there is some strange mystic power in the place to transfigure the weakest, most wretched music into harmony for the celestial spheres. After poking about in the bowels of the earth for three or four hours, visitors to the Cave arrive at Echo River, where they embark on a disgustingly muddy scow, or if the party is large enough, two or three wretched boats are brought into requisition. The women are all dressed in fancifully coloured bloomer dresses, and with the uplifted lanterns, present a strange and weird appearance as the boat is pushed from the shore, and floats down into the black gloom, the lights reflecting themselves on the surface of the deadly still water, and lighting up with strange effect the arch of rock overhead. When they are fairly out of sight we enter the other boat, and ourselves push out into the dark stream. Dark—awfully dark it is. The dark river of Death finds on earth no more vivid parallel than this. You know, in the first picture of Cole's "Voyage of Life," the gloomy river of the past, from which floats out into life and light the little boat of the baby voyager. The stream issues from a dark rocky cavern, mysterious and unknown. Such a stream is this on which we are embarked. Silent and gloomy, dark and mysterious, it serves as a type of the past and the future—of the past mystery whence all life evolves of the inscrutable future whither all life tends. The feeling of security is not very great. The boat sinks down almost to the water's edge, and the perpendicular slippery rocks on either side offer no ledge on which a shipwrecked voyager might find a temporary footing. Above, sometimes so low that you must crouch to avoid it, and again so high as to be scarcely visible, rises the rock-roof, while the water in which you glide is thirty feet in depth, and as cold as the brow of a corpse. There is no sound but the rippling made by the boat; not a cricket along the shoreless stream, not a fish to plunge up and flash a moment in the air before returning to its

watery home—no symptom of life, no sound, no motion save that made by ourselves.

Hark! there is a sound! Far off a delicate shade of music, so faint as to seem the ghost of some wandering echo. But by degrees it increases. It becomes clear and defined. Rich harmony trembling with strange sensuous wildness—fluttering around the rocky projections, swelling in waves of harmony to the arched roof above. Now it appears to come from one direction, now from another. Anon a higher note or strain is heard like some clear voice rising above a mighty chorus. Never did syren sing more magic songs to listening traveller, never did the mysterious maiden of Lurlei-burg chant more entrancing melody to the unwary boatman who floats along the moonlit Rhine. Suddenly a turn of the boat brings you opposite a break in the perpendicular rock-shore, and perched upon a mass of broken rock you see a party of four negroes playing upon violins and a cornet. Those are the syrens, these the Lurlines of Echo River. Out on the earth's surface their music would be merely quaint and odd, but here, in the Mammoth Cave, it is weird and unearthly.

Floating away, out of sight of the above minstrels,—who are in fact the barber, bootblack, or waiter from the hotel at the mouth of the cave—their music resumes its supernatural tones and effect, and so until we land at the opposite shore of the dark river, it haunts the ear with its peculiar harmony—while ever after it forms the most vivid reminiscence of a visit to the Mammoth Cave. —*Correspondent of Dwight's Journal of Music.*

BOSTON, UNITED STATES.—We hear of a movement for the organisation of an Amateur Musical Society, composed of gentleman in this city, who propose meeting weekly for the purpose of practising the *orchestral* works of the great masters, under the guidance of one of our best musical directors. In some features this organisation will resemble a club, which known to many of us as the "Boston Amateur Club" has existed here for many years (we think since about 1830) but has lately been discontinued. Most of the best members of the old Club, whose performances have been listened to by many of us with much interest, will compose the nucleus of the new organisation with the addition of some fresh active members, and, if found necessary, some professional talent. In one important point the enterprise will be new to us. It is intended to add *associate* members to the active ones of the association, somewhat on the plan of the Orpheus Club, so that those who cannot play may at least help *pay*, and have the pleasure of being present at the musical and social meetings of the Society, by thus contributing a part of the material aid which every such enterprise requires. The members are gentlemen of the highest standing in this community, of culture and refinement. We understand that the first meeting for the season will be held on Monday evening next, to organise for the winter campaign, which offers an opportunity for new members to join.—*Dwight's Journal of Music.*

MILAN.—Yesterday was given the *Barber of Seville* with a perfection of execution seldom heard on the stage of our greatest theatre. This could not be otherwise when the parts were confided to the artistic intelligence and prodigious throats of a Witty (Whitty), a Stecchi Bottardi, and a Ronconi. They did not sing the smallest branch of that divine music without being two and three times recalled; in fact the *Barbiere* was yesterday evening one applause, one ovation. Stecchi sustained his well-merited reputation; Ronconi betrayed a talent superior to every eulogium, and played the part of *Figaro*, both in singing and acting, to make it appear a novelty—a creation whose originality was all and entirely his own. The Witty, who appeared in the *Cenerentola*, the humble, mortified, and ill-treated child of the ashes, became in the *Barbiere* the brilliant and astute *Rosina*. She adapted so well every expression of her face, every smile and every gesture to all the different and difficult points of her position, that it would be hard to decide whether she is more charming as a singer than she is as an intelligent and accurate actress. Don Bartolo (Parodi), Don Basilio (Rigo), and even Berta (Nebuloni), had applause in their airs, that they sang in a way that rendered them worthy of standing by the side of companions of such reputation.—*Lombardia.*

At the Santa Radegonda the *Cenerentola* has ceased for the

present, at least to triumph; the Witty in the last representation was regaled with a beautiful bouquet of flowers, that put a perfumed seal to the glory she has acquired this season, a glory of which she can be all the prouder, for it has been gained in a city that, in the art of singing, stands the first in Italy, which for so long has dictated the laws to every other country.—*Gazetta*.

### Advertisements.

S T. J A M E S ' S H A L L ,  
(REGENT STREET AND PICCADILLY.)

### MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

BY GENERAL DESIRE,

A SECOND BEETHOVEN NIGHT,

On MONDAY, DECEMBER 10,

BEING THE LAST CONCERT BUT ONE BEFORE CHRISTMAS.

#### PROGRAMME.

PART I.—Grand Quartet, in A major (Posthumous), two Violins, Viola, and Violoncello, first time at the Monday Popular Concerts (Beethoven). Herr BECKER, Herr RIES, M. SCHREURS, and Signor PIATTI. Song, "The maiden and the river" (Benedict), Miss LASCLEES. Duet, "Thy pardon, dearest treasure" — Canzonet, first time—(Dussek), Miss AUGUSTA THOMSON and Miss LASCLEES. Sonata, in E flat, Op. 7, Pianoforte solos—second time at the Monday Popular Concerts—(Beethoven), Mr. CHARLES HALLE.

PART II.—Sonata, in F major, for Violoncello and Pianoforte—second time at the Monday Popular Concerts—(Beethoven), Signor PIATTI and Mr. CHARLES HALLE. Canzonet, "Fidelity" (Haydn), Miss AUGUSTA THOMSON. Song, "Sweet evening star" (W. V. Wallace), Miss LASCLEES. Trio, in G major, for Pianoforte, Violin, and Violoncello—second time at the Monday Popular Concerts—(Beethoven), Mr. CHARLES HALLE, Herr BECKER, and Signor PIATTI.

Conductor—Mr. BENEDICT.

ON MONDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 17th,  
THE LAST CONCERT BEFORE CHRISTMAS,

Will be devoted to the Works of various Masters.

Pianiste ... ... ... Miss ARABELLA GODDARD.

Stalls, 5s. ; balcony, 3s. ; unreserved seats, 1s.

### HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.— LAST WEEK OF THE SEASON.

THIS EVENING (Saturday), December 8, ROBIN HOOD.

MONDAY, December 10 (in consequence of the brilliant success on Wednesday last), LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR will be repeated, with TITIENS, VIALETTI, BRIANI, and GIUGLINI (their last appearance but two).

TUESDAY, December 11, re-appearance of SIMS REEVES, first time since his debut calamity, and last time but two this season, in ROBIN HOOD.

WEDNESDAY, December 12, MARTHA ; TITIENS, LEMAIRE, VIALETTI, and GIUGLINI.

THURSDAY, December 13 (last time but one), ROBIN HOOD. Last night but one of SIMS REEVES.

FRIDAY, December 14 (last night of the Italian Operas), Grand Miscellaneous Performance for the BENEFIT of Mlle. TITIENS (being her and Signor GIUGLINI's last appearance previous to their departure for the Continent), on which occasion will be performed the First Act of NORMA, Polione (on this occasion only), Signor GIUGLINI; Orosio, Signor VIALETTI; and Norma, Mlle. TITIENS. After which, the Second Act of MARTHA ; TITIENS, LEMAIRE, VIALETTI and GIUGLINI. To be followed by a Selection from IL TROVATORE, including the celebrated MISERERE, in which Mlle. TITIENS and Signor GIUGLINI will appear. To be followed by a Ballet Divertissement, in which Mlle. MARSOTTI and Mad. MORLACCHI will appear. To conclude with the Fourth Act of LES HUGUENOTS, in which TITIENS and GIUGLINI will take their farewell.

SATURDAY, December 15, the last night of ROBIN HOOD (last appearance of Sims Reeves and last night of the season).

Commences each evening at 8 o'clock. Reduced prices.

### To Correspondents.

J. H. N. (Liverpool).—Spa was the place, not Baden-Baden.

Sr. Bs. (Alsacia).—“Nunc tunc. Non habes aliquid dicere, bonum aut malum.” “Macedonia (*tamen*) ante a nomine Emathionia regis, cuius prima virtus experientia in illis locis extant.” This without malice, prepose or otherwise.

### Notice.

THE MUSICAL WORLD may be obtained direct from the Office, 28 Holles Street, by quarterly subscription of Five Shillings, payable in advance; or by order of any News-vendor. ADVERTISEMENTS are received until Three o'clock on Friday Afternoon, and must be paid for when delivered.

Terms { Three lines (about 30 words) ... ... 2s. 6d.  
Every additional line (10 words) ... ... 6d.

### The Musical World.

LONDON: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1860.

TO resume a still unsifted topic: —

Some, even among the grave and wise, are led to regard music in no higher light than that of a frivolous and elevating luxury; but, on the other hand, it has had advocates,—eloquent advocates, indeed—and among these many exalted and famous intellects. One of the sternest and least sensual of ancient legislators, the magnificent Lycurgus, was a great and earnest encourager of the “divine art;” one of the most learned and sagacious of ancient historians, the unequivocal Polybius, attributes the ultra-humanitarianism of the sons and daughters of Arcady to the universal influence of music among them, and the savage barbarity of their neighbours, the ferocious Cynethians, to their as universal neglect of, nay, contempt for it; one of the most urbane, polished, systematic, and far-seeing of modern philosophers, the Voltaire-worshipped Montesquieu, preferred music before all other means of recreation, and pronounced it the only one among the arts incapable of corrupting the mind—wherein, nevertheless, we find him unjust to the other arts; for although art may be corrupted, art which in itself is pure cannot corrupt.

Then fancy the, if not exactly dry, laborious, and, though deep and wise, a thought pedantic Quintilian—or Quintilian: he is incessant in his praises of music, extols it not merely as an incentive to valour, but as an useful instrument of moral and intellectual discipline, not merely as a pleasant auxiliary to science, and an object of attention to the most gifted among men, but as a source of comfort and an alleviator of toil to the humblest. And it is but truth to say that in this, like the illustrious author of the *Esprit des Lois*, Quintilian, or Quintilian, is no more than just.

What though the plump-shouldered Samuel liked not music; what though Othello cared not greatly for “a music that might be heard,” and instructed his clowns to make his bridal serenaders “play soft;”—what of this and that? Read Shakespeare, with whose allusions to the art of their affection we will not insult our readers by presuming they are not familiar. Read Shakespeare, did we say? Read all the greatest poets. Even Walter Scott loved music, although incapable of recognising a tune he might have heard ever so frequently. His harmonious numbers would have showed that, had we not his historiographed words to attest it. We entertain an immeasurable, if not an incommensurable, esteem for the modern race of comic epic-grammatical minstrels, whose lyres are strung with quirks, and who, headed by Horace Mayhew, and other versicular cultellators, twang the world to cachinnation; but would it be just to weigh them in the scale with Phoebus, with Hermes, with the demigods, or even with the mortal heroes of old Hellas? “We suppose, nay,” as Aries the cowherd said, in reply to King Arthur’s interrogatory about the legitimacy of Tor; “we suppose nay.” The heroes (to

pitch aside the gods and "demis") of ancient Greece, were ambitious (many—most of them) to excel in music; and it is recorded against, rather than in favour of, Themistocles, that *he* was not. Socrates himself, "the divine" master of Plato (a capital musician, Plato), and fountain of philosophic wisdom, reviled himself for having in his youth neglected the study of this art. Said Socrates to one of his disciples,—"Had I been skilled in music, I could have softened Xantippe." What were his last words to Cebes, before ingurgitating the fatal draught? "I have, O Cebes, all my life been haunted by a spirit, which seemed repeatedly to say to me, 'O Socrates! compose and practise music.'" The admonition of the spirit plagued him in his latest moments; and, when, under sentence of death, he diverted himself with turning Aesop's fables into verse, and composing a hymn to Apollo (Phœbus), the only sort of harmonious essay in his power. Our authority for this is Plato himself, who relates the story in the fourth division of his immortal *Phædon*. Even Horatius (Mayhevius—not Flaccus) must yield the bell to Socrates. But, if he will not give in to the master of Plato, is he ready to face the author of *Ecclesiasticus*? Does not the son of Sirach declare the ancient poets and musicians to be worthy of honour, and place them among the benefactors of mankind?

*Ex uno*—we forgot the rest. Music has ever been the delight of accomplished princes and the most elegant amusement of polite courts. Thus might argue Mr. Samuel Warren, if not Mr. James Hannay, no less conservative though better worth conserving. Mr. James Hannay might argue (and may, if he pleases, in the *Edinburgh-Courant*), that music is just at present so combined with things sacred and otherwise important, to say nothing of its close connection with our pleasures and amusements, that it seems almost a necessity of existence to nine out of ten of us. *Magnam vim habet musica* (Mr. Hannay might continue); it plays a considerable part in the Divine service of our churches; it is essential to military discipline; and, in its absence, the theatres would languish, if not die out. There is scarcely a private house without its flute, its fiddle, its harmonium, its harp, its organ, or its piano; it refreshes the fatigued spirits (*animos tristes subito exhilarat*); is an antidote (when not an enchanting aid) to melancholy; and mitigates the pains of sickness. Still more, it is a blessing to humanity, for it tends to banish mischief\*, and blunt the edge of care.

We never much cared for street music; "the voice of a mandrake had been sweeter," but that is beside the question. The theme is not exhausted, although our pen is dry; next week we may redip it and resume.

WE should hardly have expected such an immediate and complete justification of the remarks in the last letter upon the decline of the Vienna Opera, from our own correspondent at Vienna, as is contained in the announcement just issued by the Government, of which the following is a translation:—

"It has been ordered that the management of the Court Opera-house, lying contiguous to the Kärntner-gate, Vienna, shall pass into private hands, the concession to continue from 1st April, 1861, to 31st March, 1866; in the event, however, of the newly-projected Opera-house being opened by the expiration of the term stated, such concession thereupon to cease.

"In certain conjunctures, moreover, the entrepreneur, as well as the management of the Imperial Court theatres, would be at liberty to

\* "Mischief" is a comprehensive word.

rescind the contract on giving due notice. The representations are limited to operas and ballets; and, although it is desirable that operas in Italian should be given, this is not made an express condition; in the tenders it should, consequently, be stated whether and under what conditions the entrepreneur would be inclined eventually to submit to the requirements set forth in paragraph 7 of "agreement." The subvention to be accorded by the State should be taken into account in such tenders. The entrepreneur would be required to give caution-money equal to one-half the subvention, such caution-money in no case to range lower than 60,000 florins Austrian currency.

"The final particulars of agreement may be learned at the Imperial Finanz-Procuratur, Vienna, throughout the provinces at the respective statthaltereis (lieutenancies); and abroad, at the Imperial Legations. Persons making tenders are required to affix their signatures to the same, expressing themselves fully bound by the several conditions.

"In the event of several persons tendering conjointly, they must hold themselves conjointly liable.

"Those persons who are desirous of making tenders are invited to send them under seal to the Imperial Obers Kammereramt (Chamberlain's office), as being charged with the chief direction of the Court theatres."

What is this but a tacit acknowledgment of the incapacity and uselessness of the present management? Although a change is absolutely necessary, the measure now resorted to is extreme, and not, in our humble opinion, very likely to succeed. Where is the sanguine *entrepreneur* to be found who will subscribe to such conditions as are here proposed? In plain terms, the announcement says that a private director is wanted to carry on the operas at his own risk for a short time, while a new theatre is being built, the Government being unable, from loss of money or some other cause, to continue the present undertaking. The private *entrepreneur* is to be liable to ejection at the option of the Government, upon a certain notice being given; he is to deposit caution-money to the amount of 5,000*l.*, and his lease is in no case to exceed five years. As to the subvention mentioned, it must be looked upon as a bait to induce some private manager to carry on that which the State has found to be a losing speculation. The agreement to which allusion is made, contains, we may suppose, other conditions equally onesided as those stated in the circular. Every publicity is to be given to the fact, that "it has been ordered that the management shall pass into private hands;" but if the terms are none other than are set forth in the announcement quoted, it will be more difficult than is supposed to find "private hands" ready and willing to direct the Court Opera-house of Vienna, notwithstanding the dignity of such a position.

ANTEATER.

MISS ARABELLA GODDARD has just concluded a short professional tour in Devonshire—a speculation (annually renewed, and with always increasing success) of the able and enterprising Mr. Ashe of Exeter. Brilliant and well attended concerts were given, alternately, at Plymouth, Torquay and Exeter—the lion's share falling to the capital town, as a matter of course.\* At all these the playing of Miss Arabella Goddard was the theme of unanimous admiration and applause. Her first appearance in London for the winter season is announced to take place in St. James's Hall, at the Monday Popular Concerts, Dec. 17th, when among other pieces she is to perform (with Signor Piatti), Professor Sterndale Bennett's sonata-duo for pianoforte and violoncello.

HERR MOLIQUE AND THE NORWICH FESTIVAL.—The sum awarded to Herr Molique by the committee of the Norwich Festival, as a remuneration for his successful oratorio of *Abraham*, has been returned to the honorary secretary, Mr. Roger Kerrison, with a request on the part of the composer that it may be presented to the charitable fund in behalf of which the festival was instituted.—*Times*.

\* We have received several letters from correspondents in Devonshire containing details to which we shall give publicity in our next number

## Provincial.

APROPOS of the erection of the New Music Hall, Brighton, the following letter has been addressed to the editor of the *Brighton Herald*:

"Sir.—Since writing in your valuable journal on the subject of a Music Hall for this town—which subject, I believe, I chiefly originated—it has been discussed in many quarters; with fairness in some, with virulence and personal acrimony in others. It is pretty generally admitted that a larger hall is required than we actually possess, not merely for musical purposes, but for important town meetings, &c. The question remains, Who is to build it? Shall it be done by private enterprise, or by the municipal authorities?

"With respect to private enterprise, the fact exists of a gentleman, the head of the leading musical firm in this town, having made an offer of leasing a part, not at present used, of the Pavilion property (not the Riding School); to pay rent for it; and to convert it, at his own expense, into the required Music Hall. This offer has been, as it would seem, systematically misrepresented. Mr. Wright has been abused for asking the town to provide him with a Music Hall, whereas the fact is that he does not ask the town for a single shilling, but would find the necessary three thousand pounds himself, and take the risk of failure. This offer is acceptable; for nothing prevents the town authorities from inserting a clause in the lease to enable them to recover possession of the property at any time, and another to give them the use of the proposed Music Hall on stated terms. It is thus clear that the town can have its hall within twelve months, through private enterprise, without the smallest risk, and with the advantage, when recovering possession, of having had it built on cheaper terms, most probably, than it could have done it for itself.

If we turn from private to public enterprise, the solution of the question is by no means so easy. The town labours under the not uncommon want of money; the debt on the Pavilion will not be worked off for some fifteen years yet; and it is difficult, if not unfair, to increase the already heavy rates, although scarcely any other means offer to develop the great capabilities of the Pavilion property. In this pecuniary difficulty, what shall we do? Shall we sell the ground-rents of the Pavilion buildings? They would sell well, but we should forego great future advantages. Shall we build on portions of the Pavilion grounds—for instance, on the frontage in New Road? That would be advantageous, and would improve a locality that stands somewhat in need of it; but the inhabitants might not consent to lose a corner of the central lung of Brighton. If the town is to do anything, it would seem that the only plan is to procure a short Act, enabling it to extend the repayment of the Pavilion purchase-money over a long term of years, then borrow on the security of the rates the necessary sum for completing the appropriation. This will take some time to do; meanwhile the most feasible thing for the Music Hall seems to be to accept the proposals of private enterprise, for which the town, when it comes into money, can substitute its own action. But, above all, it is necessary, in discussing matters of such public importance, to do so fairly, and to lay aside all private pique or animosity.

"I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

"AN OCCASIONAL CONCERT-GIVER."

—Our Windsor correspondent informs us that Mr. Dyson's second concert took place at the Town Hall on Tuesday evening, under distinguished patronage. The singers were Miss Wilkinson, Miss Janet, Mr. Dyson, and Mr. Lambert; instrumentalists, Mr. Gunnis, violinist, of her Majesty's private band, and Mr. Goss Custard, pianist. The concert was well attended.—The *Bath Express* has a long article devoted to Mr. Walter O. Gibbs' concert, given at the Assembly Rooms, Bath, Tuesday evening, the 27th ult., and which was an affair of more than ordinary importance, inasmuch as a trio and pianoforte sonata of Beethoven, and a violoncello sonata by Mendelssohn for pianoforte and violoncello, were performed. The programme was entirely instrumental, the executants being Mr. Walter Gibbs (pianoforte), Mr. Carrodus (violin), and M. Paque (violoncello). The strictly classical character of the selection does not appear to have been thrown away on the amateurs of Bath. The *Express* speaks in high terms of praise of the pianoforte used by Mr. Gibbs, sent especially for the occasion by the Messrs. Broadwood.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC.—A private chamber concert was given by the students at the institution, Tenterden Street, Hanover

Square, on Saturday evening, December 1st, when the following selection was performed:

*Part First.*—Scherzo, romance, and rondo, pianoforte and flute, from Sonata, Op. 11 (C. E. Horsley), Miss Brinsmead and Mr. Radcliffe. Duet, "Two merry gypsies" (G. A. Macfarren), Misses Robinson and Ibbotson. Song, "In a dream-nighted December" (J. W. Davison), Miss Bramley. "The Lake," "The Millstream," "The Fountain," three musical sketches for pianoforte (Dr. W. S. Bennett), Miss Walsh. Trio, "The coming of May" (Walter Macfarren). 1st voice, Misses Armytage, Robinson, Sellman, and Walsh; 2nd voice, Misses Bramley, Henderson, Taylor, and Watson; 3rd voice, Misses Flewitt, Ibbotson, Pitt, and Spence. Song (MS.), "If to thy heart I were as near" (F. Westlake, student), Miss Henderson. Duet in B flat, two pianofortes (Schumann), Miss Tasker (K.S.) and Mr. Mason.

*Part Second.*—Trio in E flat, pianoforte, clarinet, and viola (Mozart), Messrs. G. H. Thomas (K.S.), A. Williams, and F. Westlake. Song (MS.), "The Exile's Adieu" (Miss Jenkins, student), Miss Bramley. Introduction and rondo, violin and pianoforte (Spohr), Messrs. Amor and Weeks. Duet, "How beautiful is night!" (B. Richards), Miss Flewitt and Mr. Barracough. Duet, allegro, brillante, pianoforte (Mendelssohn), Miss Lindley and Mr. J. B. Turner. Romance, "Long I've watched," *preciosa* (Weber), Miss Henderson; flute obligato, Mr. Radcliffe. Trio, "Rest thee on this mossy pillow" (Henry Smart). 1st, 2nd, and 3rd voices as above. The vocal music was accompanied by Messrs. J. B. Turner and Mr. H. R. Evers.

The entertainment was greatly enjoyed by a select company of friends and patrons of the institution, who were present by invitation. We trust this may be only the first of a series of such meetings. They are both useful and interesting. The more the students act for themselves the better.

**SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.**—The performance of *Solomon*, which inaugurated the winter oratorio season on Friday evening last, was in almost every respect worthy of the high position by unanimous consent awarded to the Sacred Harmonic Society among the musical institutions of Europe. The admirers of Handel assembled in large numbers at Exeter Hall, and were more than usually warm in their demonstrations of satisfaction. Though *Solomon*, as a whole, is not to be ranked with certain of the more familiar works of its author—who wrote it in the decline of life, when his invention was on the wane, shortly before the loss of sight brought his career as a producer to an end—it contains quite enough of beautiful thoughts, of vigorous colouring, and ingenious contrivance, to stamp it with immortality. Its merits, and its shortcomings (such as they are), nevertheless have been sufficiently dwelt upon; and it is unnecessary to repeat what has so often been said in extenuation of one who rarely needed apology, but who in *Solomon* was trammelled with as feeble and ill-constructed a book as was ever submitted to composer. Wherever the subject is amenable to effective musical treatment, Handel is no less striking and impressive than in the *Messiah*, *Israel*, and other oratorios, where inspiration never failed him. Many of the choruses, indeed (we need not specify them all by name), reach the highest flight. As an example of antiphonal writing, "From the censer curling rise" (Part II.) may be ranked with some of the finest of his so-called "double choruses"—examples of which, by the way, abound in *Solomon*. In pathetic force "Draw the tear from hopeless love" has hardly been excelled; while for dramatic expression "May no rash intruder" and "Shake the dome" (Part III.), in precisely opposite styles, challenge comparison with the most remarkable passages of a corresponding nature in *Samson*, *Judas*, *Deborah*, or (to quit the domain of oratorio) *Alexander's Feast*. To hear such choruses as they are now given by the members of the Sacred Harmonic Society—who since the appointment of Mr. Costa have continually made progress—is well worth a visit to Exeter Hall, and an attentive hearing of a much more unequal work than *Solomon*—which, it may be added, is so unsparingly condensed as to do away almost entirely with the prolixity inevitable where there are no omissions. We admit that to meddle with Handel is a task both delicate and ungrateful; but, on the other hand, the whole of *Solomon* at a sitting would exceed the limits of ordinary endurance. As well think of taking in *Paradise Lost* from end to end, without a pause. It is even found expedient to pass habitually one or two pieces from

the third part of the always interesting *Messiah*; and perhaps the only oratorio of Handel which at public performances can safely be offered without curtailment is *Israel in Egypt*, which has the advantage of being as conveniently short as it is unceasingly sublime. That a judiciously abridged *Solomon* can not only be endured, but listened to, with unabated pleasure, was shown on the present occasion, when nearly all the choruses were more or less applauded, two of them—the epithalamium at the termination of Part I, and the marital ebullition in Part III. (one of the series in which the varied powers of expression attributed to music are so powerfully illustrated)—rousing the audience to enthusiasm.

The solo music was in excellent hands. No one in our time has declaimed and sung the part of *Solomon* so admirably as Mad. Sington-Dolby, who, now at the very pinnacle of her reputation as a mistress of the sacred style, seems resolved to put rivalry out of the question. The soprano music was divided between Mad. Lemmens-Sherrington, apparently summoned to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of Mad. Novello, and the young and clever Miss Banks, one of Mr. Hullal's most promising discoveries, who, in the part of the Queen of Sheba, did full justice to her rising fame. What little is left for the bass enjoyed the advantage of Mr. Lewis Thomas's fine voice and ripe experience; while the arduous recitatives and airs of the tenor were allotted to Mr. Montem Smith, an artist who, to say the least, is invariably painstaking and correct. The band was as strong and efficient as in former seasons, and Mr. Costa (whose additional accompaniments were used) conducted the performance with his accustomed energy and skill. On the whole, this representation of *Solomon* more than sustained the credit of the Sacred Harmonic Society.

The *Messiah* (the first of the Pre-Christmas series) was given last night.

**MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.**—The epithet "popular," as applied to a performance of music, no longer means something adapted to an uneducated and unrefined taste—something in which the high and classic productions of the art are eschewed as being calculated only to weary the audience. At some of our popular concerts the customary fare is fit for the palate of the most fastidious amateur; and, far from being neglected on this account, such concerts flourish more and more. Such is the case with the Monday Popular Concerts, given every week during the season at St. James's Hall. At first we had some suspicion of the reality of the musical taste shown at these concerts. When we heard pieces of great length, highly complicated, such as we had always believed to be "caviare to the general," not only attentively listened to, but applauded with enthusiasm, we could not help thinking that there must be some affectation at bottom, and that people would tire of pretending to be delighted with things they did not understand! But time has shown that this was a mistake. These concerts, successful the first season, are still more successful the second. They are even improved in quality; an inferior piece is never admitted into their programmes, nor is an inferior performer employed. Yet the spacious hall is every night crowded to the doors by persons in the habit of frequenting cheap entertainments; and no assembly of *cognoscenti* could show a sounder or more discriminating taste. And the consequence is, that these concerts are now attended by the most musical people in London.

—*Spectator.*

**MR. SIMS REEVES.**—It may not be generally known that the domestic calamity which prevented this eminent singer from resuming his part in *Robin Hood* at Her Majesty's Theatre, on Saturday last, according to announcement, was the sudden and unexpected death of his father, which happened on the Friday previous, and rendered a suspension of all professional duties for a period inevitable. Our readers will hear with pleasure that Mr. Sims Reeves will positively re-appear on Tuesday, and perform in *Robin Hood* at least three times before the temporary close of the theatres.

**WINDSOR.**—On Tuesday evening, Dec. 4th, Mr. Dyson's second concert for this season took place in the Town Hall under distinguished patronage. The artists engaged for the occasion were Miss Wilkinson, soprano (of the Crystal Palace Concerts); Miss Jarrett, contralto; Mr. Dyson, tenor; and Mr. Lambert, basso. Mr. Gunniss, solo violinist (of

her Majesty's Private Band), and Mr. W. Goss Custard, solo pianist and accompanist. The concert commenced with the trio, "When shall we three meet again?" sung by Miss Wilkinson, Miss Jarrett and Mr. Lambert. Miss Wilkinson next gave "Summer Night," by Henry Smart, very effectively, and "Take this cup of sparkling wine" her singing of which much gratified the audience. Mr. Lambert contributed two songs, Calcott's "Last Man," an "Old English Melody," and "The Holy Friar." He was in good voice and gave them with his accustomed power and success. Miss Jarrett gave great satisfaction, and was much applauded, in her songs, "I'm a poor shepherd maid," and "Truth in absence." Mr. Dyson's tenor voice was heard to advantage in "The Troubadour's Song," Verdi, and "Shine on Beautiful Star," in both of which he was very successful. The duet by this gentleman and Miss Jarrett, "Home to our mountains," was pleasingly sung. Mr. Gunniss and Mr. Custard each gave a solo, the former on the violin and the latter on the pianoforte. Macfarren's trio, "The Troubadour," was very effectively sung by Miss Wilkinson, Miss Jarrett, and Mr. Lambert. The concert gave entire satisfaction to a crowded audience, and concluded with the "National Anthem."—*Musicus.*

### THE ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA FOR 1861.

A PARODY BY PORCUPINE.

(Inscribed to *Augustus Mayhew, Esq.*)

### ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA, SEASON OF 1860.

LESSOR RE GALANTUOMO.

The public is respectfully informed that the season of this popular Establishment will shortly commence under unusually favourable auspices, and with the most powerful and talented Company ever yet brought before its numerous friends and patrons, while the *répertoire* will include a number of works entirely new to the majority of them. In proof of this, the Lessee submits the following list of artists, many of them of European reputation, and others of great promise.

SIGNOR CAVOUR,  
(*Primo basso profondo*, of the Theatre Royal, Turin).

SIGNOR GARIBALDI,

(The unrivalled *primo tenore di forza* of the South American, Roman, Lombard, and Two Sicilian Opera Houses, unanimously pronounced by the entire press to be the greatest artist of the age).

SIGNOR FARINI,

(Of the Theatres Royal of Florence and Milan).

SIGNOR CALDINI,

(Whose performances at the Theatres of Ancona and Castelfidardo excited a perfect *furore*, and who is now engaged at Genoa, where he "takes" immensely).

SIGNOR PERSANO,

(The admirable delineator of nautical characters, from the Theatres of Ancona and Capua), and

SIGNOR FANTI,

(Whose triumphs at the Theatres of Central Italy are too well known to need mention).

The Company will also include other well-known artists, such as  
LA MARMORA, RICASOLI,  
DURANDO, RATAZZI,  
PEPOLI, POERIO,

And those youthful pupils of Signor Garibaldi, whose recent *débuts* at the Sicilian and Neapolitan Theatres excited the admiration of the most critical audiences—namely, Signori

MEDICI,	TURR,
COSENZ,	EBER,
BIXIO,	DUNNE,
SIRTORI,	WYNNDHAM,

And others too numerous to mention. Among the novelties to be produced, the Lessee would call especial attention to the revival of the famous Operas,

LA CONSTITUZIONE,  
IL PARLAMENTO,

AND  
LA GAZETTA LIBRA,

By Signor Inglesi,

For many years the most popular and attractive works ever produced at Turin, and which are almost unknown in other parts of Italy; and to

LA LIBERTA,

(an entirely new Opera, by Signor Garibaldi and the Lessee, in which the former will sustain the principal character). Other works by well-known composers will also be produced at the earliest possible opportunity; and in the spring, the Lessee hopes to enter into an engagement with the temporary managers of the Roman and Austrian Opera Houses, for the production of the great *chef-d'œuvre*

L'ITALIA UNITA,

the promise of which has excited such enthusiastic hopes in every civilised country. Should the Lessee be able to produce this long-expected work, the whole strength of his company will be engaged in its performance, and, if necessary, several French and Hungarian artists will be solicited to strengthen the cast. Further particulars will be shortly announced.

**ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC.**—The students give a concert to-day at the institution in Tenterden Street, the principal feature in which is to be a selection from Mozart's *Idomeneo*.

**PUN.**—Let the organist of St. George's Hall, Liverpool, play ever so badly, at the worst he is *BEST*.—(*Goose with the Golden Eggs.*)

## The Opera.

ROYAL ENGLISH OPERA.—Another glorious triumph for English opera—another hope for national music. Mr. Balf's new opera, *Bianca, the Bravo's Bride*, produced on Thursday evening, was one of the most legitimate successes ever witnessed within the walls of any theatre. The excitement commenced with the overture, which was encored, and was rampant at the end of the first act, when a vociferous call was made for Mr. Balf, who, after some delay—doubtless not being prepared for so early a summons—made his appearance, and was received with deafening acclamations. Four long acts, enduring four hours and a half, would have cooled any ordinary enthusiasm, and have tired any ordinary patience; but the applause, far from abating, went on increasing, and was most vehement in the last two acts, the audience unanimously encoring a gallop in the last scene, which was indeed inevitable, since the music is exciting in the extreme, and the *pas* is most admirably arranged by M. Petit, the *maître de ballet*, and was capitally danced by the young ladies.

The libretto of the *Bravo's Bride* is from the pen of Mr. Palgrave Simpson, who has founded his plot on Monk Lewis's melodrama, *Rugantino, the Bravo of Venice*, and has pretty closely adhered to the original. *Rugantino* is not only utterly buried in oblivion, as far as regards production on the stage, but is excluded from most editions of English dramatic works, even from those, like the *London Stage*, which pretend to comprise every work that achieved popularity in its day. It is, however, included in "Cumberland's Plays," but does not appear to have obtained much favour at any time. The story, as adapted in the libretto, may be thus briefly detailed:—

A certain romantic young Prince of Ferrara falls in love with Bianca, daughter of the Duke of Milan, but, though betrothed to her in some mysterious way, which does not appear, wishes to be loved for himself, and not for his princedom. He takes upon him the guise of a young soldier of fortune, and wins the heart of the tender Bianca, but withholds confession of his affection. He departs to the wars—to test the young lady's love by absence, we may suppose—and "crushes the bravo band." How this is effected we are not informed; but the "bravo band" is headed by a terrible chief, Fortespada, whose very name strikes terror to all the country round. Our prince is "led by fate" to the brigand's den, and finds him dying, and so penitent, that he confesses "a foul conspiracy of death" on the part of certain nobles against the Duke of Milan, in which he is implicated. The brigand gives the prince a list of the traitors, and dies. Upon this, the better to prosecute his plans to discover the heads of the conspiracy, the prince disposes himself as the brigand, gains access to the conspirators, and induces them to elect him as their chief. He has them thus entirely in his power, but why he does not denounce them at once is not told. The prince is a great adept at disguises. Two of the conspirators having determined to kill Bianca in the grand cathedral of Milan, where she goes alone to pray, our prince, who knows everything, is ready behind a pillar, caparisoned as a mendicant, and stabs the highborn gentleman who was about to stab her. Bianca faints, and on coming to herself she sees the beggar transformed into the brigand, and is terrified when she hears him claim her, in life or death, as the "Bravo's Bride." The young lady—who must have been singularly obtuse as to vision not to detect her lover through one of his disguises—naturally screams, and brings her father and friends to her assistance. The Prince, however, is not so easily caught. Directly he hears the approach of footsteps he assumes the garb of a monk, and makes his escape. We need not dwell upon the incident of the Prince appearing to the Duke as the bravo, since nothing comes from it, but may go at once to state the *dénouement*, which happens thus:—Changing his tactics, the Prince appears to Bianca as Odoardo, when a confession of love takes place on both sides. The lovers are detected in their transports by the Duke, who, at first enraged with Odoardo, at last consents to grant him his daughter's hand, provided he would place Fortespada in his power that night, at twelve, in the great ducal hall. Nothing can be easier for the Prince to comply with, as we know. Accordingly at night, when the ball goes forward, and the midnight hour has tolled, Odoardo appears and announces that he

has captured Fortespada alive. "Bring him before us," cries the Duke, whereupon the Prince retires, and returns as the Bravo. He is unanimously voted to destruction, when the royal troops appear, and, at a sign from the Prince, carry off all the conspirators in custody. Lastly, his Royal Highness declares that Fortespada and Odoardo are the same, and, being pressed for further disclosures, confesses that the Prince of Ferrara is identical with the bravo and the young officer.

As a specimen of Mr. Simpson's work, we shall quote the two verses, addressed by Bianca to her father, in the duet, "From my childhood," wherein the young lady is desirous to disbosom herself of that secret which she thinks she has too long kept to herself:—

## "BIANCA.

"From my childhood didst thou pray me  
In thy heart to seek, my father,  
Should a false world e'er betray me,  
That pure love which ne'er betrays;  
And my sorrow I have brought thee,  
In affection weak, my father,  
Thee I seek now, as I sought thee,  
In my early childhood's days."

"In my childhood, ay, I swore thee  
To respect thy wish, my father,  
And my spirit bowed before thee,  
As a loving child obeys;  
But, my heart has now betray'd thee,  
Nor bows 'fore thee still, my father,  
With the same love that obey'd thee  
In my early childhood's days."

Of the music generally we are inclined to think that the composer has expended more thought and care upon it than on any previous occasion. But on this point we must defer entering into details until our next. With respect to the first performances of *Bianca*, let the subjoined extracts from two of our morning contemporaries bear witness. Our own impressions shall be published with our criticism of the music.

**BIANCA, THE BRAVO'S BRIDE.**—(*From The Times, Dec. 7th.*)—A grand romantic opera in four acts, abounding in complicated music, built upon a story that embodies a great variety of incidents, and written throughout with an evidently serious purport, cannot in fairness be dismissed after a single hearing, more especially at half an hour past midnight. Such an opera is the long and anxiously-expected new work of Mr. Balf, who for upwards of twenty years has been the most popular of our native composers for the stage, and who last night added another to his long list of successes. His *Bianca, the Bravo's Bride*, is framed more ambitiously than any of his later productions, and for that reason demands and merits stricter attention. We shall therefore be satisfied at present with announcing its enthusiastic reception by a crowded house. The composer was thrice summoned before the curtain, and again appeared a fourth time, leading on Mr. Alfred Mellon, who had well earned the compliment by the ability and labour he must have bestowed in preparing what was an admirable representation, even for this theatre, where imperfect first-night performances form the exception rather than, as is too frequently the case, the rule. It may as well be stated that *Bianca* is founded on the well-known romance of *Rugantino, or the Bravo of Venice*, also once familiar to the public as a melodrama, and that Mr. Palgrave Simpson has turned the original materials into an operatic libretto with the tact and judgment of an experienced hand. Nearly every member of the company is engaged in the distribution of characters, which are so numerous that Mr. Balf has been able to accommodate as many as six basses and baritones—Messrs. Wharton, Lawrence, Corri, Wallworth, Kelly, and Distin—with more or less conspicuous parts. Mr. Harrison represents the mysterious and formidable bravo—

"Like Cerberus, three gentlemen in one;"

Miss Louisa Pyne, whose singing from end to end was a model of finished and brilliant execution, the Princess distinguished by his tender solicitude; Mr. St. Albyn a (comic) second tenor; and the promising Miss Thirlwall, a maid of honour somewhat advanced in years. To conclude, scenery, costumes, and a more than usually animated *ballet*, all effectively combine to lend attraction to the spectacle. The star of English opera is clearly in the ascendant.

**BIANCA, THE BRAVO'S BRIDE.**—(*From the Daily Telegraph, Dec. 7th.*)—Mr. Balf's anxiously-expected opera was produced last night, and achieved the most unquestionable success. The popular composer was

called before the curtain after the first and second acts, and again at the conclusion of the opera, and on each occasion was received with tumultuous applause. Although the performance did not terminate until midnight, the enthusiasm of the large audience seemed to increase rather than diminish, as the work approached its conclusion, and from the overture to the dance in the last scene there was a continual demand for the repetition of pieces which at once seized the popular taste. But while in *Bianca* Mr. Balf's wonderful facility for inventing striking melodies is quite as conspicuous and as inexhaustible as ever, the work exhibits an immense superiority over all his former efforts in the orchestration. In this important matter the example of Meyerbeer's enduring success seems to have exercised a beneficial influence on our English composer. The story of *Bianca* has been adapted by Mr. Palgrave Simpson from the well-known tale of the *Bravo of Venice*; and in each of the four acts into which the opera is divided opportunities for musical effect have been presented, of which the composer has always availed himself with the happiest results. Mr. Balf has been most fortunate in the representation of his work. Indeed, we have never seen all the members of the Covent Garden company to such advantage as in *Bianca*; and it would not be too much to affirm that the chorus and orchestra have never been so perfectly irreproachable on the first performance of any opera. Miss Louisa Pyne has great opportunities for the display of her varied powers. The charming ballad in D flat in the third act—which we prophesy will be the favourite *morceau* of the opera—was delivered with exquisite pathos, while the trying scene that opens the fourth act, and the brilliant *finale* to the opera, in which the vocalist reached almost the extreme limits of the human voice, were sung with the perfection to which we are accustomed in Miss Pyne, but which we may elsewhere seek in vain. Miss Thirlwall's singing is always conscientiously correct, but as yet she has not had so good a chance of showing that in action she is no less artistic and admirable. Mr. Alberto Lawrence's noble voice, judiciously subdued, was heard to much more advantage than on his first appearance in *Il Trovatore*; Mr. Henry Wharton, throughout painstaking, was compelled to repeat the ballad in praise of gold, which, with its bold and striking melody, is sure to become a popular drawing-room song; and Mr. St. Albyn excited great applause, no less by his *terpsichorean* than by his vocal efforts. On Mr. Harrison, however, the most onerous duties—histrionic as well as musical—devolve; and in all his disguises, whether as bandit, beggar, or noble, he sustained the character with unflagging energy and invariable effect. The *mise en scène*, while offering no novelty, is as admirable as usual; and we must not omit to mention the dance in the last scene, which is very prettily contrived. Nor should we forget to state that Mr. Alfred Mellon, in answer to a loud demand, was led on with evident satisfaction by Mr. Balf at the conclusion of the opera, and was received with cordial and well-merited applause. Altogether, we have never had to record a more unequivocal success.

MR. BALFE'S *BIANCA*.—(*From the Morning Post, 7th Dec.*—Last evening the first important novelty of the season, namely, Mr. Balf's new opera of *Bianca*, was produced at the above theatre with complete and well-deserved success.

*Bianca*, the libretto of which is by Mr. Palgrave Simpson, is founded upon Monk Lewis's well-known tale of the *Bravo of Venice*, which was adapted to the stage many years ago as a startling melodrama, under the title of *Rugantino*. Mr. Balf's opera begins on the cathedral square at Milan, and as the curtain rises groups of penitents are discovered kneeling on the steps of the famous "Duomo," and in various parts of the stage. After a brief instrumental introduction played upon the organ the penitents sing a solemn choral prayer, "To Thee above our hearts we raise," an excellent specimen of Mr. Balf's talent in the serious style of composition. This over, a herald (Mr. Distin) appears with a proclamation, which sets forth, in the name of the high and puissant Matteo Visconti, Duke of Milan, that a reward of 500 ducats will be paid for the apprehension of the notorious bravo, Fortespada (Mr. W. Harrison), whose daring iniquities have rendered him the terror of Milan and the surrounding country. The crowd of citizens to whom this proclamation was addressed now begin to debate among themselves how it will be possible to secure the bravo, and are presently assisted in their deliberations by a young nobleman called Memmino (Mr. H. Corri), and Beppo, an *attaché* to the Duke of Milan's household (Mr. St. Albyn). Beppo relates a dreadful legend about the bravo, interrupted occasionally by exclamations of terror from the crowd, or the vainglorious boasting of Memmino. A chorus of monks, who appear at the gate of the cathedral and desire the crowd to disperse, in order that the Duke and his

daughter may pass without intrusion to their evening vesper prayers, brings the first scene to a conclusion.

All this, which is musically expressed in one connected piece, beginning with the chorus of citizens, "What man so bold?" is certainly one of the best things Mr. Balf ever wrote. It is spirited, genial, full of variety, and thoroughly dramatic. Mr. Simpson, too, deserves great praise for the very ingenious construction of this scene for musical purposes. In the second scene we find Count Malespina (Mr. Henry Wharton), Montaldo (Mr. Wallworth), Memmino (Mr. H. Corri), Contarini (Mr. Lyall), Michele (a ruffian in the service of Malespina), and others enjoying the pleasures of the wine-cup, and plotting the destruction of the Duke of Milan (Mr. Alberto Lawrence) and his daughter Bianca (Miss Louisa Pyne). Malespina says to his friends that

" The dual guard is bribed,  
The Church is zealous for our good :  
The Emperor approves. When once the blow is struck  
His troops will hasten to support us, and, meanwhile,  
We must be zealous—bold."

It also appears that the chief Ministers of State are to fall by the assassin's steel. A first-class bravo being wanted, of course no better man than Fortespada could be found, and that his professional services may be obtained is sufficiently proved by a written communication to the following effect, and which has been mysteriously placed in the hands of one of the conspirators:—

" Ye, who need my dagger—seek me ; ye shall find.  
Ye who blood would shed shall see it shed around.  
When you meet, wherever gathered, then behold  
The bravo, Fortespada."

But a sudden alarm obliges the conspirators to be brief, and depend upon themselves. A young nobleman, who has discovered their machinations, determines to betray them. He must then, be disposed of at once, and thus lots are drawn to decide who is to strike the blow. Before, however, this matter is definitely settled, Fortespada suddenly appears before the astonished and affrighted conspirators. His terms for aiding them are that he shall be made their leader. They refuse; whereupon Fortespada wishes them "good evening." But Malespina, more determined than his companions, throws himself between the bravo and the door, and calls upon the rest of the conspirators to fall upon Fortespada and destroy him. They hesitate, the bravo laughs loudly and hideously, and, seating himself at the wine-table, looks calmly at them all. "I know your secrets," says he; "a certain scroll lying on my table contains a full account of them, and if I return not in half an hour that scroll will be in the hands of the Grand Duke."

Fortespada is at once elected chief of the gang, and having with some difficulty obtained all the names of his associates, taken an oath to annihilate the *oppressors of Milan*, drunk a bumper to the success of their enterprise, and overheard Michele promise to assassinate Bianca that very night as she returns from the cathedral, he takes leave in the pleasantest possible manner of his newly-made friends. Here ends the first act, the music of which is for the most part in Mr. Balf's very happiest manner. The baritone *scena*, "Yes, proud Bianca," in which Malespina expresses his determination to take revenge for his slighted love, has a sweet and *cantabile* slow movement, very charming in itself, if not in the strictest accordance with the sentiment of the words; and the *cabaletta*, beside being quite unimpeachable with respect to verbal expression, is highly spirited and eminently tuneful. But the *finale*, beginning with the words, "Friends, we must act without delay," has still higher claims to consideration, arising from the very skilful treatment given to a large mass of dramatic material which it was necessary to bring into accordance with the laws of strictly musical form. To construct one coherent piece in dealing with such ever-varying and frequently opposite emotions, and to make it constantly vivacious and entertaining, was certainly no easy task, and yet Mr. Balf has accomplished it to the satisfaction both of musicians and the general public.

Before terminating our remarks upon this act, we must specially mention the capital bacchanalian song—

" Glorious wine,  
Liquor divine,"

as one of the most genial and attractive pieces in the opera.

The second act opens with a scene supposed to represent one of the aisles in Milan Cathedral. It is night, and Bianca is about to depart, after her evening devotions, when she is confronted by Malespina, who here makes a last and ineffectual attempt to win her love before he allows his dreadful purpose to be carried into execution by the ruffian Michele, who, dagger in hand, is waiting to murder her, according to his promise. Upon the final rejection of Malespina, the assassin approaches to execute his design; but just as he is about to strike, his hand is arrested, and the poignard turned into his own heart, by an old man habited as a mendicant, who suddenly emerges from some obscure corner. Bianca, terrified, demands to know who is her deliverer, and is thus answered by the supposed beggar:—

Go, tell thy father, on his throne of pride,  
Twas Fortespada; thou the bravo's bride!"

Bianca calls for help, and the bravo having momentarily disappeared behind a pillar, returns clad as a monk. Nobody recognises him but Bianca, who cannot bring herself to denounce the man who has saved her life, and thus Fortespada again escapes. This closes the second act, to the music of which, as to that of the first, we can award high praise.

The opening chorus for female voices, "Slowly fades the light of day," is as pretty and spontaneous a piece of vocal harmony as Mr. Balfe ever composed; and the succeeding dialogued recitative and duet for Bianca and Malespina, "Although with cold disdain," if of a more elaborate complexion, and perhaps less fluent and *cantabile* than Mr. Balfe's inspirations generally are, must, nevertheless, be set down as particularly creditable to him as an orchestral colourist, and exceedingly dramatic in purpose. The melodic accompaniments assigned to the first violins over the subject in the duet is not only brilliant, fanciful, and charming, but at the same time quite original. The florid figurative counterpoint is indeed richly varied throughout the slow movement, which has peculiar merits, though perhaps not such as are calculated to strike the general public at a first hearing. The second movement, with its Verdian unisons, is less to our taste, but we doubt not it will find its way to the barrel organs.

In the commencement of the finale to this act, "Forebodings sad come creeping o'er my mind," Mr. Balfe has again displayed his imagination and ingenuity as an orchestral writer to very great advantage. The rather Meyerbeerish employment of the clarinet in *F solus*, as accompaniment to the voices, makes a pure and legitimately musical effect, charming yet simple in construction.

The solo assigned to Fortespada, "Thou art the bravo's bride," is also to be highly commended for dramatic fire and accent; and the praise which belongs to a melodious and well written concerted piece in the modern Italian manner is due to the slow movement, "Ah, mystery strange," which terminates this act.

The third act shows us, firstly, a scene in which Beppo and a young lady of the Court, Zeffirina (Miss Thirwall) are practising an old-fashioned gavotte, and sundry other dances, for the grand ball, which the Duke of Milan is about to give in honour of the Duke of Ferrara, who is expected to visit the Milanese Court, and to whom he has promised his daughter Bianca in marriage. The music here is exceedingly spontaneous and pretty; its only fault being a somewhat barbarous mixture of stiff ancient musical phraseology with the ultra-modern style. On the whole, however, it must be admitted that Mr. Balfe (who shines most brightly in light and brilliant music—witness his *spirituel* and charming "Quatre fils d'Aymon") has distinguished himself most honourably in setting this rather unsuggestive scene to music. The bright, joyous dance tunes with which it abounds will doubtless be reproduced in every possible shape, and played upon every piano. At the end of this scene, Bianca enters, and presently expresses her repugnance to the projected union with the Duke of Ferrara, and her love for the desperate man who saved her life, in a thoroughly *Balfan* ballad, "In vain I strove to teach my heart," one of the most genial and characteristic effusions that ever emanated from the facile and prolific pen of our popular English, or rather Irish, composer.

The second scene in this act opens with a recitative and air for the Duke, in which he expresses his anxious cares as the wearer of a prince's crown of thorns. The instrumental introduction to this,

assigned to the violoncellos, accompanied by double basses, affords another proof of Mr. Balfe's fancy and science as an orchestral composer. If the following air, "If treachery base," were less uncertain in tonality, more simple and natural in melody and harmony; if the major and minor modes were not so confused in the perforation, we should like the composition much better. In the following duet, however, "From my childhood," Mr. Balfe gives us more of himself. Anything more unaffected or idiosyncratic than the two principal movements he has given to the world. The dramatic action of the rest of this scene makes us acquainted with Fortespada's offer to the Duke to espouse his cause with his daughter, the indignant rejection of the bravo's proposal by his highness, and the consequent grief of Bianca. The principal musical features here are a bold and energetic melody, "Say, why this bold disdain" (a worthy companion to the famous "When the fair land of Poland"), and the concerted piece, "Oh, night of woe!" which is full of dramatic sentiment, and musicianly from first to last.

In the third act we discover that Fortespada, the supposed "Bravo of Venice," is a noble in disguise, the very Duke of Ferrara to whom Bianca was betrothed by her father. The principal pieces in this act are an admirably written scene for Bianca, "Yes, I shall see him once again;" a ballad for Fortespada, "Once more upon the path of life;" the baritone air, "Chiefs on might relying;" a sparkling and thoroughly *dansante* polka and gallopade; and a most brilliant rondo finale sung by the heroine of the opera.

With respect to the performance we have only time to state that it was on the whole admirable. The artists, one and all, exerted themselves to the utmost, and unanimous applause of the warmest kind was bestowed upon them on every possible occasion.

Mr. Balfe was called for at the termination of each act, together with the principal executants. All critical details upon the performance must, however, be deferred, as the opera did not terminate till midnight.

**THE SISTERS MARCHISIO.**—A Paris journal, *La Presse*, in noticing a musical performance which recently took place at the house of Madame Orpila, one of the most distinguished amateurs in the French metropolis, thus speaks of the two fair artists, Mlle. Carlotta and Barbara Marchisio, who have already won for themselves so much renown at the Grand Opera and in private salons by their *ensemble* singing:—

"But the principal attraction of the evening was the first appearance in this artistic salon of the sisters Marchisio: they sang the duos from *Matilda di Shabran* and *Norma* in the midst of a transport of enthusiastic applause; the perfection of their method, the richness of their organ, but, above all, that admirable combination of the two voices, the quality of which harmonises so perfectly, that marvellous blending together even of the most difficult *nuances*; those oppositions of light and shade so wonderfully managed, so exquisitely gradated, in short, all those qualities of *ensemble*, twins, as it were, which characterise and individualise the talent of the sisters Marchisio, astonished, no less than enchanted, the brilliant auditory. We doubt whether the sisters Marchisio ever obtained a success more real and more flattering at the same time. Among the company who were most liberal of their applause were Mad. Miolan-Carvalho, M. Duprez, and the "brothers Braga."

**THE MARCHISIO SISTERS.**—Miles. Carlotta and Barbara Marchisio, in making their first appearance at the Opéra in *Semiramide*, had real difficulties to surmount. They had been at least twelve months engaged; the quasi-official announcements of the opera had promised beforehand two singers of the highest order, two young and great artists of different kinds, the one gifted with an agile and brilliant dramatic soprano voice, the other having a magnificent contralto voice, both *tragédieuses*, devoted to the art and possessing the sacred fire.

It was consequently with extreme emotion that the sisters stepped for the first time on the redoubtable scene of the Opéra, where so many artists of talent failed, where great and enduring celebrities consecrated themselves. With what ardour the two sisters confronted so terrible an ordeal is matter of history. They were accepted immediately by the chosen public, whose opinion is sovereign, and of which the press is the faithful echo. Mlle. Carlotta was compared, and with reason, to the best Semiramises who had ever interpreted the adorable music of Rossini; and Mlle. Barbara to the most renowned Arsaces of whom the Italians have preserved the recollection. The success of the sisters Marchisio is then the most sincere, the most *positive*, if, in matters of art, it may be permitted to employ the term. It is doubtful, nevertheless,

less, if they consent to sign a new treaty with the Opéra; and doubtless they feel that the Italian stage offers them more profit, more glory, and more easy triumphs. It will be a serious loss to the Opéra that it could not retain two singers of such extraordinary talent; but the great artists can hardly be deceived in regard to their future prospects, as trees bend their leaves in that direction whence proceed the rays of the sun. Why, then, should not the sisters Marchisio, like other queens of song, having won Parisian applause, seek for admiration and enthusiasm in other capitals of Europe, and even in the New World?—*La Presse Théâtrale* (reduced into English.)

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